

CITY OF WILMINGTON NORTH CAROLINA

CITY OF WILMINGTON PUBLIC INFORMATION RE-

Spring 2012 Volume 10 Number 3

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Adventure, Nature, Exercise and More!

Youth summer camps starting in
June for all age groups

Learn more at:
wilmingtonnc.gov/recreation
or call 341-7855

Space is limited,
so register early!

Check inside

The city will be changing its
voluntary recycling program
beginning in December 2012.
Recycling will be more convenient
for customers at no extra cost!
Check inside to learn more.

Special insert

2011 Annual
Stormwater Report

2012-13 city budget starting to take shape

Development of the recommended 2012-13 budget will be completed this month. This year's budget will be impacted by the 2012 property revaluation conducted by New Hanover County earlier this year.

Revaluations are done every few years using a consistent method to evaluate how much properties are worth. This helps ensure that property taxes are applied fairly among property owners by reflecting current values in different neighborhoods. The new property values went into effect on Jan. 1, 2012.

The majority of properties in Wilmington decreased in value since the last revaluation in 2007, but did not lose as much value as the beach towns and unincorporated areas.

Did you know?

Wilmington has the second lowest tax rate of all large cities in North Carolina.

With the decrease in the city's overall property tax base, the city tax rate will need to be increased to bring in the same amount of money as it did before revaluation. This is called a "revenue neutral," or break even rate.

Did you know...

- During the recent revaluation, property values went down for more than 85% of homeowners inside the city limits.
- Wilmington's overall property tax base dropped by 9.5% - from \$14.2 billion to \$12.9 billion.
- Reduced property values in unincorporated areas and the beach towns: New Hanover County 15.1%; Carolina Beach, 34.2%; Kure Beach 32.8%; Wrightsville Beach, 25.6%.
- By law, the city must have a balanced budget with no deficit by June 30 of each year.



The tax rate will be set when the 2012-13 budget is finalized in June.

In order to deal with the declining tax base that funds city government operations, the city continues to look at ways to reduce costs without reducing core services. Goals for the 2012-13 budget include:

- Restoring funding for some of the projects and services that have been put off during the economic downturn, including major maintenance and construction projects;
- Maintain current service levels in core areas such as police, fire and trash pick-up;
- Maintain healthy savings for emergencies of 15-18% of total budget - city currently has a bond rating of AA+.

Key Dates

- May 15** Recommended budget presented to City Council
- June 5** Public hearing and first vote on budget
- June 19** Second and final vote on budget

Keep up-to-date at:
wilmingtonnc.gov/budget



Citizens rank services in recent survey

Citizens gave the city high marks on city services in a survey completed in February, 2012.

The city conducts a survey every two years to gauge satisfaction levels and perceptions of city services. The survey identifies what the city is doing well and what services the city needs to improve upon and then the data is used to help set focus areas and develop funding priorities.

The survey is one of the most accurate ways the city has to hear directly from a large number of citizens about what is important to them and how they would like their tax dollars spent.

The survey found that city residents are generally confident in city government and think the city is spending about the right amount in most areas, but a majority of citizens said the city should spend more on maintenance of streets and sidewalks and traffic flow.

Survey highlights:

- 63% were satisfied with the overall quality of city services; another 29% said services were okay.
- Satisfaction with the city's quality of customer service far exceeded the national average.
- Survey results from 2010 compared to 2012 improved in 56 of 80 areas rated.

HIGHEST levels of satisfaction:

- Fire
- Parks & Recreation programs & facilities
- Trash, recycling and yard waste
- Police

Top PRIORITIES for improvement

- Maintenance for streets and sidewalks
- Quality of police services
- Improvement of traffic flow on city streets

Complete survey online at wilmingtonnc.gov - see "Key Topics"

PICK BLUE to go green



City to offer large recycling carts

What's changing

Earlier this spring, City Council approved a change that will make its voluntary recycling program easier

and more convenient for citizens while also saving the city money. Beginning in December 2012, the city will provide large, wheeled recycling carts that will allow the city to change pickup of recyclables from once a week to once every two weeks. The number of citizens who recycle and the amount recycled is expected to increase with the change.

What stays the same

Trash will continue to be picked up once a week and pick-up days for trash, recycling and yard waste will remain the same. There will not be an increase in pick-up fees.

Carts

The carts will be provided at no additional charge to city trash customers. Most customers will receive a 95-gallon cart, which is the same size as the large trash cart. The 95-gallon cart is expected to

be big enough to hold two weeks' worth of recycling. A smaller 35-gallon cart will also be available. Earlier this month, city trash customers received a postcard asking them to notify the city if they want the smaller cart. Customers who want the large carts do not need to notify the city.

Costs

The city will spend \$1.1 million to purchase and distribute the new carts, which will be recovered in five years through reduced manpower costs of \$220,000 annually. There will be no change in fees to customers and no charge to customers for the recycling carts. No additional trucks will need to be purchased as the trucks the city has are already outfitted to pick up the new recycling carts.

Benefits

In addition to making it easier to get recycling to the curb with a wheeled cart, the change is also expected to result in customers recycling 15-20% more, which means less going into the county's landfill.

When

Customers will receive their new carts in December, 2012, just in time for the Christmas holidays, when recycling is heaviest.

i What do to

Earlier this month, city trash customers received a postcard about the new carts. Most customers will automatically receive a 95-gallon cart. This cart is the same size as the city's large trash cart and big enough to hold two weeks' worth of recycling for most customers. Customers do not need to do anything for this option. The deadline to sign up for a smaller cart has been extended to May 21.

The ONLY customers who need to contact the city are those who:

- Do not currently recycle but want to start or;
- Want a 35-gallon recycling cart (same size as small trash cart) or;
- Want to keep 18-gallon red bin.

Sign up by phone: 910-341-0225

Sign up online: wilmingtonnc.gov/recycling

Center's first year a success



BREAKING ATTENDANCE RECORDS

During its first year of operation, the Wilmington Convention Center held over 125 events with more than 65,000 attendees. Several of those broke attendance records, including five conventions involving state organizations that had attendance increases ranging from 14% to 125%.

For 2012, more than 100 events have already been held or booked, including nine conventions. These events are estimated to bring 8,700 visitors to our area, which will generate more than 3,400 hotel night stays with an overall economic impact of \$41.8 million for local businesses.

Hotel Update

In February, the City began negotiating with Harmony Hospitality, Inc., of Virginia Beach, Va. to sell the company land to build a privately owned hotel next to the Convention Center. Harmony is proposing to build a 194-room full-service hotel that would be privately owned and operated. Those negotiations are expected to be completed this summer with construction beginning later this year if an agreement is approved by City Council.

Cross City Trail coming together



Progress continues on the Gary Shell Cross-City Trail in several locations. Following are highlights:

Teal Street Bridge

Work on the Gary Shell Cross-City Trail bridge is now complete. The project, which includes 170 feet of bridge and boardwalk, spans the headwaters of Bradley Creek from the end of Teal Street in the

College Acres neighborhood to the edge of the Autumn Hall property.

Autumn Hall connector

The next section of trail will run from the Teal Street Bridge through Autumn Hall and connect to the trail on Eastwood Road. Construction is expected to begin in late summer.

Rogersville Road/Mayfaire connector

Work has just been completed to install approximately 800 feet of a multi-use path along the north side of Eastwood Road between Rogersville Road/Bay Creek Drive and Town Center Drive that now connects to the Mayfaire Town Center. A pedestrian signal has been added to the existing signal and crossing at the Eastwood Road/Rogersville Road intersection.



crosscitytrail.com

Citizens like newsletter

Why mail this newsletter in lean economic times? In a survey of residents in February, the city newsletter was ranked as one of the top services used by citizens and one of the most preferred sources of information about city government.

How do you like this newsletter? Please let us know how we can make the newsletter better. To provide feedback, email the city at newsletter@wilmingtonnc.gov.

Traffic signal investment paying off

The city's new traffic signal system has been improving traffic flow since it was installed in 2010. More than 200 traffic signals were updated, allowing for better timing and coordination of signals. The upgrade also reduces traffic congestion by better managing traffic on overcrowded roads.

Now, signals can be adjusted almost immediately for events such as Azalea Festival or the 4th of July Fireworks, or for emergencies such as traffic accidents, or the recent Pine Valley brush fire that resulted in road closures.

The project was funded jointly by the city and the state DOT, including \$3 million in funding from the 2006 voter approved Transportation Bond.

Check traffic anytime

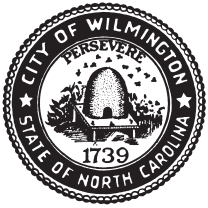
The city's 30 traffic cameras monitor 116 intersections - over half of all city intersections with a traffic light.

Now you can check Wilmington traffic online live at one of our cameras by visiting: wilmingtonnc.gov/trafficcams



City of Wilmington
P.O. Box 1810
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Wilmington, NC 28402

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Public Information Report

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Wilmington City Council

Mayor and City Council341-7815
Bill Saffo, Mayor
Earl Sheridan, Ph.D., Mayor Pro-Tem
Neil Anderson
Margaret E. Haynes
Kevin O'Grady
Laura W. Padgett
Charles H. Rivenbark, Jr.

City Info Line.....341-7800

City Manager341-7810
Sterling Cheatham

Editor.....341-0061
Malissa Talbert

Contributing Staff: Becky Blue, Chris Compton,
Jennifer Isbell, Dylan Lee, Kazu Takeda

The **Public Information Report** is published by
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Contact us at 910-341-0833, send an email to
newsletter@wilmingtonnc.gov or mail us:
Communications Office, P.O. Box 1810,
Wilmington, NC 28402-1810

General Information Phone Numbers

Citizen Services Information341-7800
Emergency.....911
Police/Non-Emergency343-3600
To find the police district assigned to your neighborhood,
see wilmingtonnc.gov/police
Fire/Non-Emergency.....341-7846
Parks and Recreation341-7855
Parks Hotline341-7852
Street Maintenance.....341-7879
Parking.....762-5678
Zoning.....254-0900
Trash pickup/Recycling.....341-7875
Stormwater341-4646
Cape Fear Public Utility Authority332-6550
Code Enforcement341-3266

Look for the  for information

Want to receive this newsletter by email?

In an effort to save money and trees, citizens
can sign up to receive this newsletter by email
instead of direct mail. If you are interested,
please email the city with your name and
regular mailing address to:

newsletter@wilmingtonnc.gov

City Council Meetings

City Council meetings are generally held on
the first and third Tuesday of the month at
6:30 p.m. at City Hall. For more information,
see the city's web site at: wilmingtonnc.gov

City Council Meetings on GTV8

Council meetings are broadcast live on GTV8, the
city channel on Time Warner Cable. Council meet-
ings are replayed:

- ~ Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, the week of
the Council meeting at 10 a.m. and 8 p.m.
- ~ Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, the week after
the Council meeting at 11:30 p.m.

This Week From City Hall

Catch a summary of city events and activities on
GTV8's "This Week From City Hall," airing twice
daily at 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. New episodes are
available on the 1st and 15th of each month.

GTV8 online

All GTV8 programming can be found on the city's
website, live or on-demand. From the front page,
simply click on "online videos." Then, select the
program you want to watch.



The city on the web
wilmingtonnc.gov



Get city information on Facebook at:
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You can also follow the Wilmington Police
and Fire Departments on Twitter:
www.twitter.com/WilmingtonPD
www.twitter.com/WilmingtonFD